

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7070
INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CINCPAC
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 1118

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PLOS PBOR PGOV PDIP EFIS EAID SE MD SF UR RE UK FR MP
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW -- OCTOBER 21 -- SUMMARY

REF: PORT LOUIS 1086 (DTG 140620Z OCT 77)

1. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RESUMED SITTING ON OCTOBER 18 IN A SESSION WHICH LASTED ONLY 45 MUNUTES. THE OPPOSITION PRESSED THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE SAYA DE MALHA BANKS ISSUE AND POSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS TO "RECOVER" DIEGO GARCIA. THE PRIME MINISTER RESPONDED THAT MAURITIUS MAINTAINED SOVEREIGN CONTROL OVER THE BANKS BASED ON THE FACT THAT THEY FELL PARTLY IN THE 200 MILE ECONOMIC ZONE AND PARTLY IN "HISTORIC WATERS" ALWAYS EXPLOITED BY MAURITIANS. RAMGOOLAM SAID HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS TO RECOVER DIEGO GARCIA, BUT HE HOPED THERE WOULD
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BE A RAPID SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE DIEGO GARCIA WHO NOW LIVE IN MAURITIUS.

2. PAUL BERENGER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM), VISITED REUNION OCTOBER 13. WHILE THERE HE MET WITH PAUL VERGES, LEADER OF THE REUNION COMMUNIST PARTY, TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR A CONFERENCE OF

"PROGRESSIVE FORCES" OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. A PREPARATORY MEETING IN ANTANANARIVO MIGHT BE HELD AS EARLY AS NOVEMBER 1. BERENGER GAVE AN INTERVIEW TO AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE IN REUNION IN WHICH HE SAID: (A) THE GOM HAD "STINKING" RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS OF THE REGION (ESPECIALLY WITH THE SEYCHELLES AND MADAGASCAR); AND (B) THAT THE MMM DEMONSTRATION AGAINST PRINCESS ALEXANDRA WAS THE OPENING SALVO OF A CAMPAIGN FOR A REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS, ONE IN WHICH THE MMM WOULD INSIST UPON AN INDIAN-STYLE PRESIDENCY (WITHOUT EXECUTIVE POWERS).

3. THE ANTI-ALEXANDRA DEMONSTRATION STAGED BY THE MMM WAS DEEMED A FAILURE BY MANY BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVELY SMALL SIZE OF THE CROWD, NUMBERED AT ABOUT 1,000. MMM PRESIDENT ANEEROOD JUGNAUTH CRITICIZED THOSE DEMONSTRATORS WHO HAD THROWN STONES AT PASSING AUTOMOBILES DURING THE DEMONSTRATION. THE MANIFESTATION ON OCTOBER 14 AGAINST THE PRINCESS ORGANIZED BY THE RADICAL MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY (MMMSP) WAS LIKEWISE SPARSELY ATTENDED BY ABOUT 200 PERSONS, AND ONLY A DOZEN OR SO STUDENTS BOYCOTTED THE GRADUATION CEREMONY.

4. THE MMM'S NEWSPAPER, LE MILITANT, CONTINUED ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF TROMELIN ISLAND. IT PUBLISHED REFERENCES TO HISTORIC DOCUMENTS THAT INDICATED MAURITIUS AT ONE TIME CONTROLLED THE ISLAND.
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5. A MMM DEMONSTRATION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S RACISM/ APARTHEID WAS HELD IN PORT LOUIS ON OCTOBER 19 AS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF RALLIES TO MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY'S POSITIONS. THE RELATIVELY SMALL TURNOUT OF 1,000 DEMONSTRATORS WAS PROBABLY DISAPPOINTING TO THE MMM LEADERSHIP.

6. APPARENTLY DRAWING UPON SPECULATIVE STORIES FROM THE LONDON PRESS, INDEPENDENT L'EXPRESS SPECULATED THAT MAURITIUS MIGHT SERVE AS THE SITE FOR NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A RHODESIA SETTLEMENT.

7. PLANNING MINISTER GHURBURRUN, RETURNING FROM A LONG TRIP ABROAD, ANNOUNCED THAT EXPECTED LOANS FROM FRANCE, GERMANY, BELGIUM AND JAPAN WOULD SUPPLEMENT FINANCING ALREADY SECURED FROM THE PRC FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN THE NORTH OF THE ISLAND. HE SAID THE NEW LOANS WILL PERMIT THE PROJECT TO BE COMPLETED BY 1980 INSTEAD OF 1982.

8. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM WILL MAKE AN OFFICIAL VISIT

TO INDIA FROM NOVEMBER 1-5, FOLLOWING WHICH HE WILL ATTEND
THE USSR'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN MOSCOW.
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Message Attributes

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